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HOGARTH AND LANDSEER.*

III.—LANDSEER AS A HUMORIST.



IN my article in the last number I chiefly treated of Hogarth as an animal painter; in the present I propose to deal with Landseer as a humorist, in comparison or contrast, which you will, with the older master.

We have seen that the points on which these artists differed were points of personal character and the object of their art; and the points in which they resembled one another were delight in humour and sympathy with animals, together with a strange affinity of artistic perception which led them to notice and study certain facts in nature for

their artistic value, which have struck no other artists as important in the same degree.

In viewing Landseer as a humorist of men and manners in relation to Hogarth, we shall see that the two artists approach and recede from one another in much the same way; but we shall also see what was not so capable of demonstration in the previous article—how closely the two men resembled each other in certain moral and artistic qualities, especially in honesty and absence of *finesse*.

Landseer as a social satirist is of course heavily handicapped at the outset, from the fact that he was an artist of dogs, and



Paganini, from a Sketch by Landseer.

not of men. Even if he had wished to be a severe satirist or moralist, like Hogarth, his efforts would have been fruitless as long as he confined himself to impersonating men in animals. All his sermons would have commenced with a joke from which there was no possibility of transition to a serious peroration.

Yet, allowing for this, with the exception of Hogarth I know of no artist who has shown in a few of his works a keener perception of the follies and humours of human society. Wilkie's 'Beadle' is not a finer satire on the fantastic tricks of "brief authority" than Landseer's 'Jack in Office'; and to find a parallel to the consummate truth of the human humour of 'Dignity and Impudence,' and 'Alexander and Diogenes,' we

must, if we do not go to Hogarth, seek among the illustrations to plays and stories by such men as Leslie and Cruikshank.

Apart, however, altogether from satire on the one hand, and from animal burlesque on the other, Landseer's reputation as a painter of human character is deservedly far less great than as



Group from Hogarth's print of 'The Oratorio.'

a painter of animals; but this is due rather to the extraordinary pitch of perfection to which he carried the one than from natural incapacity to shine in the other. His pictures of men are all good, his Highlanders especially, and his study of the illicit distiller in 'The Highland Whiskey-still' is a masterpiece of character; yet, for all this, and in spite of the undoubted fact that after he went to Scotland to see Sir Walter Scott in 1824, the spirit of his work changed from the animal to the human, so that subsequently to that date the interest of his works, though composed principally of animals, all centred in the relation of animals to men, one feels, in looking at his human figures, that they are wanting in force, and that there is more interest—not only animal and artistic, but also human—in a few touches bestowed upon an animal than in his most carefully executed figures of men and women. With the exceptions of the hard, dare-devil features of the whiskey distiller, and the wonderful but terrible face of debauched beauty in his 'Comus,' there is scarcely a human countenance in his gallery (excepting portraits, of which more by-and-by) which can bear comparison in strength and interest with those of his animals.

As a rule, what was said by Fielding of Hogarth's men is true of Landseer's animals, viz. they think; but as much cannot be said for his men. But it is difficult to believe that an artist who was capable of inspiring the faces of his dogs with the expression of so much human folly could not have become a real rival of Hogarth in human faces, if he had devoted his life to this branch of Art; and as for the greater portion of his artistic life he was far more interested in humanity than most artists, it needs something more than his exceptional love for animals to account for his never attempting a scene composed of human figures which would exhibit his really considerable natural talent for catching the various expressions of different men.

How fully Hogarth entered into the characters of animals in their relation to man has already been shown from his works; but the works of Landseer do not show to the full his powers of drawing humorous pictures of men. It is not generally known what a quick and clever caricaturist he was, and this not by any undue exaggeration, but by a power of seizing and enforcing the natural peculiarities of a face and figure. His sketch of Paganini is the only instance of this which can be shown here; but numberless are, or rather were, the humorous sketches which he drew of the men whom he met in society. It was his habit to make these sketches and pass them round for the amusement of the circle, and then to crumple them up and throw them in the fire. As a pendant to Paganini, Hogarth's

figure of the Conductor of the Oratorio is given, which was probably not more of a caricature than the other.

Of this reticence of natural faculty it is difficult to say how much was due to his early training, and how much to natural bent of disposition towards animals; but that the former had much to do with determining the character of his compositions will not, I think, be doubted. Though Hogarth in his earliest published works showed himself at once as a satirist of men and manners, it must be remembered that he was at this time twenty-three years of age. Down to this period he had been employed, as an engraver upon silver, executing coats of arms, mottoes, and initials for that eminent silversmith, Mr. Ellis Gamble, of Cranbourne Street. Whatever essays in Art he made previous to his apprenticeship are lost to us; but he began as a child to draw, and his copy-books at school were more remarkable for the drawings which adorned them than for the correctness with which the exercises were performed. Among these, if we could recover them, we should doubtless find, together with caricatures of schoolfellows and masters (if he dared to ornament his books with such penal impiety), drawings of those animals of which all children are so fond. If he had been allowed, as Landseer was, to pursue his boyish taste exclusively—not only without let or hindrance, but with every assistance which his father and brother could lend him—we should probably have found that animals figured very largely among his chosen subjects; for though Hogarth, even in his childhood, showed his taste for satire by mimicking his fellow-creatures, no child's world is complete without its animals. But Landseer was also a consummate mimic, at least in after-life, and humanity played a much more important part in Hogarth's early life than in Landseer's. In the first place Hogarth went to school in London, and was to a far greater extent than Landseer a London boy. The school-



Group from 'Laying down the Law,' by Landseer.

room, with its inhabitants young and old, was his first studio, and this was afterwards exchanged for the crowded streets and the shops and shows of London life—he was a cockney, pure and simple. Moreover, he had to think for himself: poverty pressed on his parents, and it was by his own wish that he, to avoid the

misery which in his father's case he saw overtake the struggling scholar, gave up the hopes of "higher education," or a free artist's life, to bind himself for seven years to toil in a silversmith's shop. Thus by the time that his apprenticeship was over, and he was able to devote his energy to Art, he was, though still young, a man of the world, with views of life formed by daily intercourse with men, and with a store of human experience gained by study of their peculiarities in long years of London life. However dubious such an education may have been to him as an artist, it was an excellent training for an observer of life, and he came out of it a highly trained satirist, with a strong natural genius for Art, with his love for animals not extinguished, but altogether subordinate to his love for satire.

It was altogether different with Landseer, whose genius for Art, if possible more precocious even than Hogarth's, was fostered, to the exclusion of every other study, from the earliest age. Though born and bred in London, it was in no crowded thoroughfare, but in what then formed the northern outskirts of the metropolis, with little but open fields stretching between his father's house in Foley Street and the hills of Highgate and Hampstead. The open country, instead of a schoolroom, was his first studio, and his studies were cows and sheep, horses and dogs. From the age of five, when he could draw animals well, the drawing of them was his exclusive pleasure and duty till he grew to manhood. Without for a moment denying that he showed an extraordinary bent in this direction, there is no doubt that this bent was so exclusively cultivated, and so little interrupted by any more human studies, that any natural disposition he may have had to study and satirize the ways of men had little chance of showing itself in his art till he grew into a man. The curious thing is not that it did not show itself more, but that it should have shown itself as strongly as it did; but he had only one way of expressing himself pictorially, and that was by drawing animals. Thus we find him as a boy of twelve



The Bench, by Hogarth.

contrasting the characteristics of England and France by his famous drawings of a 'French Hog' and a 'British Boar,' in a spirit which may properly be characterized as Hogarthian; and five years later we have the picture of 'The Braggart,' in which England, Scotland, and Ireland are represented by three

dogs of different and characteristic breed. It was not, however, till 1824 that what I have elsewhere termed his natural-history stage was completed, and he began to look upon life through human spectacles, and to treat animals principally in their relation to man. So that just about the same time of



Group from 'Alexander and Diogenes,' by Landseer.

life as when Hogarth published his first satirical prints, Landseer was beginning, with his 'Catspaw' (1824) and his 'Travelled Monkey' (1827), to show that he, though a painter of animals, was a humorist at heart, and had a keen eye for the follies of humankind. But at this time he was a highly trained artist, with his love of satire not extinguished, but subordinate to his love for animals.

So at twenty-one, or thereabouts, both of these artists left the traditions of their early employment to strike out each a new line in Art—the one the animal propensities of men, the other the human propensities of animals. Without thereby denying that Hogarth's natural talent was essentially the drawing of human, and Landseer's of animal faces and forms, yet after Landseer's early life it would have been as difficult for him, whatever his bent, to have developed into the designer of the 'Marriage à la Mode' or 'The Bench,' as for Hogarth to have painted 'Night and Morning' or 'Laying down the Law.' Landseer had been brought up and educated in what may be called animal-land, and had learnt its language so thoroughly that for ever afterwards he thought in it, and his ideas, however human, clothed themselves as naturally in animal forms as Turner's in rocks and ruins, and clouds and light, and would have had to go through a process similar to translation before he could express himself otherwise.

One other reason may also be urged why he did not exercise more fully his natural talent for humour. His mind, if less vigorous, was more sensitive and many-sided than Hogarth's. Hogarth was a humorist only, always failing when he attempted sentiment, whereas Landseer was a lover of nature, a sportsman, and a poet, besides a humorist. Humour was Hogarth's business, but it was Landseer's play, and it is therefore no wonder that we find the number of purely humorous works that the latter executed was comparatively small, and that those which will bear anything like close comparison with Hogarth are smaller still: at the same time, the distinctive character of

these few works is so unmistakable, and they are scattered so evenly throughout his artistic life, that they are plainly as legitimate growths of his mind as his 'Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner' and his 'Flood in the Highlands.' The most important of these are the 'Twa Dogs' (1822), the 'Catspaw' (1824), the 'Travelled Monkey' (1827), 'High Life' and 'Low Life' (1829); 'Highland Music' (1830), in which the idea of discordant sounds is almost as painful as in Hogarth's 'Distressed Musician'; 'Jack in Office' (1833), 'Dignity and Impudence' (1839), 'Laying down the Law' (1840). Then there comes a pause, the commencement of his attacks of nervous depression, which force his thoughts away from the carelessness of humour to the sadness of sentiment. In 1849 came the 'Alexander and Diogenes,' most humorous of all perhaps, but most laboured; and in 1865 the playful 'Connoisseurs' ends the list. Mixed with his more serious work throughout his life, even to the last, were many bright, genial, and sub-humorous pictures, but none to compare with those mentioned in the vigour of their humour, still less to compare with Hogarth.

To compare even these in detail with Hogarth's pictures would scarcely be a fruitful task. The views which they took of human life and the objects they sought to attain being so different, the resemblances which can be easily found between

them are of a more general kind. One or two of them we will mention, and leave our readers to pursue the comparison further if they will.

The first of these is the power they both possessed of placing a little humorous pictorial drama of their own upon the stage so that it told its own story without need of words. Not even Hogarth could have devised a scene fuller of greater varieties of human meanness than Landseer's 'Jack in Office,' of which, and of his other pictures of the same class, Landseer might have said in the words of Hogarth, slightly altered, "Let the figures in my picture be considered as players, dressed for genteel comedy or farce, for high or low life. I have endeavoured to treat my subjects as a dramatic writer; my picture is my stage, my dogs and monkeys are my players, who, by means of certain actions and gestures, are to exhibit a dumb show."

It is, however, in 'Alexander and Diogenes' that Landseer approaches most nearly to the variety of Hogarthian humour. This picture, despite its difference in subject and the nature of the human follies laughed at, has yet many points of resemblance to the boudoir scene in the 'Marriage à la Mode.' The composition is similar. The left is taken up in both pictures by the two principal figures, who are engaged with one another, while the rest of the company amuse themselves on the right.



Group from Hogarth's print of 'Taste in High Life.'

The levee of Diogenes is indeed very different from that of Lady Squanderfield. Alexander has no similarity in character to Counsellor Silvertongue, but for power of expression there is little to choose between the cynicism of the tub philosopher and the seductive gallantry of the lawyer, between the dangerous deliberation of the lady and the insolent pride of the conqueror; while, if we turn to the conceited folly of the courtiers in both pictures, we recognise our friends quite as well among the dogs as among the ladies and gentlemen. The two heads in Hogarth's 'Taste in High Life' are, however, more convenient for contrast with the canine courtiers of Landseer than any which could be selected from the 'Marriage à la Mode,' and are accordingly engraved here.

Hogarth prided himself on not being a caricaturist, and rightly in the main; for though he may have, by accumulation of incident and by the exaggeration of fact, heightened the power and humour of his scenes, he never distorted or falsified nature. In this lies the secret of the greatness of his power, which, in spite of all his coarseness, still keeps, and will for ever keep, his fame impregnable from all attacks of the fastidious, and, in spite of all changes of manners and thought, from

the corrosive process of time. Without this the morality of his purpose would have been of little avail: morals are very cheap, and those he chose to illustrate the cheapest of all. That a harlot and a rake go to ruin, that marriages of convenience end in disgrace and crime, that industry succeeds better than idleness, are facts almost too trite for a copy-book; and if the force with which he had shown these truisms had been aided by distortions of fact or concessions to the popular feeling of the period, they would have decayed with the age that brought them forth. But his force was genuine, and unadulterated either by the temptation to be effective at the expense of truth, or by the fashion of the day. This criticism does not, of course, apply to his occasional squibs, which were ephemeral in their very nature.

It is early yet to speak of the endurance of Landseer's reputation, but in the majority of his works the same praise may be given. They are honest, straightforward, and manly to the backbone; and though some, such as the once famous picture of 'Bolton Abbey,' may decline in popularity, as it was painted in accordance with a popular sentiment which was ephemeral because founded on ignorance or partial knowledge, the majority

of his works should retain their place in the public honour, because, in addition to their cleverness, they are true, in just the same sense as Hogarth's are true, viz. that the humour of them and the sentiment of them, which gain our tears or laughter (humour and sentiment both as cheap as Hogarth's morals), are not enforced by any concealment or distortion of the truth, but at worst by such an exaggeration of it as was necessary for an artist who made his animals act the characters of men. In his picture of 'Alexander and Diogenes,' in which he exhausted the resources of his ingenuity to make dogs look like men, the effect is produced by such a subtle exaggeration of natural canine expressions, that were each dog cut out and placed in a canvas by itself, it is doubtful whether any exaggeration would be perceptible; and this is in a picture of intentional burlesque, to which it would be almost as absurd to apply the usual tests of truth as to an extravaganza.

One out of many more radical resemblances of disposition may be noted, viz. the simple straightforwardness of the method of expression. There was never any doubt in the mind of what

they wanted to do or how to do it; no confused, vague work in their handling, no indefiniteness in their aim, no attempt at concealment of thought, no striving after half-conceived ideas. This is especially observable in their portraits and their pictures of terror. The first of both artists represent the plain, unaffected impression of their minds, without added sentiment or artistic flattery of any kind. Hogarth's portrait of Captain Coram and Landseer's of his father, the former's portrait of Miss Rich and any of Landseer's portraits of the children of the aristocracy, show how much can be done by the simple, unaffected portraiture of benevolent or sweet faces. In their pictures of terror, on the other hand, no amount of pain daunted them. As Hogarth painted the child on the spit, Landseer painted the otter on the spear; as Hogarth did not shrink from the terrors of the madhouse, so Landseer could face the dread of the cruel bears disturbing with brutal irreverence the bones of the Arctic travellers; and there is no picture of Hogarth's which is more terrible in its plain rendering of sensuality and lust than Landseer's illustration to Comus. W. C. M.

AMERICAN DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE.*

III.



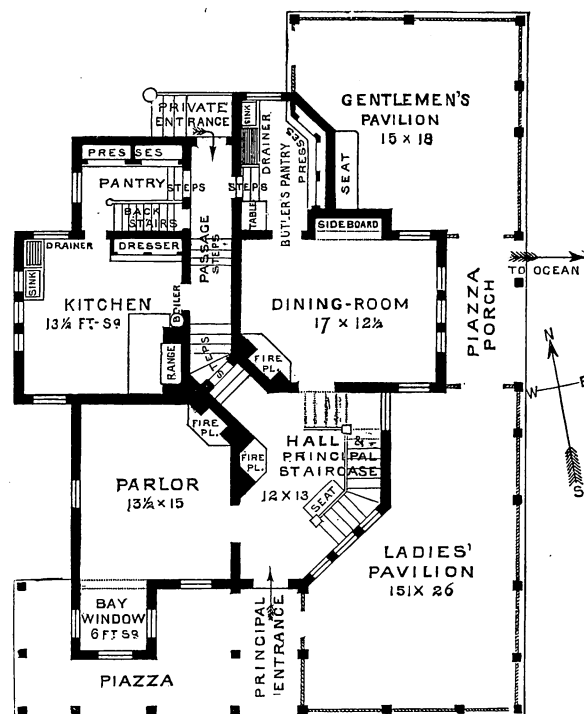
N my last article I proposed to enter, in some detail, on the subject of decoration and furniture. I shall begin with very simple forms of both, such as might meet the temporary needs of persons who, in addition to their town-house, and also sometimes to a second house in the country, want to have a seaside cottage, where their families—if, as often happens with men engrossed in business, they do not themselves—may spend the hottest season of the year; perhaps not more than a couple of months. They like to have things "tasty" even for these two months, but prefer to reserve their large expenditures for the houses they live in all the rest of the year.

Let us, before entering into consultation on details, first glance at the plan of such a "shantee," as the owner modestly calls it, to the scandal of the architect's assistants, by whom, on numerous sheets of "pressed Whatman" and "double-thick Manila" (for even the design of a "shantee," if men and women of good sense and good breeding are to live in it, needs much study, and takes, in illustrating it, many sheets of paper), it is duly registered as a "Marine Cottage for Commodore Paul Jones Katamaran." (Ground Plan, Fig. A.) To suit our Atlantic seaboard, this house was designed to spread out the principal divisions towards the east, where—

"... paved with heaven's azure smile,
The wide world of waters is vibrating."

In this "cottage by the sea"—where most of the short period of occupation is lived out-of-doors—the parlour becomes little more than a makeshift, devoted alternately, under stress of rainy weather or an occasional snap of undue cold, to the purposes of a library or music-room. As a withdrawing-room, its use is usurped by the piazza, with its pavilions, which are important features of the lay-out, and which, unless on unusually formal occasions, also take its place as a reception-room. One may pass a week by the seashore without having occasion to enter the parlour of his dwelling; but one is not likely to dip every day in the surf, and incessantly inhale the Atlantic breezes, without punctual attendance in the dining-room at least three times a day. This room, therefore, takes precedence of the drawing-room, so far as the main attractions of the situation—the ocean view and breeze—are concerned, though the former, by means of the eastward opening in its alcove or square bay-window, is not neglected as to this point, and has the nearer position—as a reception-room should have—towards the main entrance of the house. But the princi-

pal hallway (Hall and Staircase, Fig. B) of such a residence is, if of sufficient size, quite likely to be more used than either drawing or dining room, for it connects both with the main resort of household and guests—the piazza. It has, therefore, the place of honour, which directly commands both the ocean and the southern aspect. But in the exterior corner of it, by carrying the wall on



Ground Plan, Fig. A.

a diagonal line, we at once, assisted by the ingathering lines of the chimney-breast and by the passageway retreating sidewise from it, find the constructive features lending themselves to an odd and picturesque interior, and make room for a valuable addition, in the way of breadth and compactness, to what we call our "ladies' outdoor parlour" (Pavilion, Fig. C), appropriately adjacent to the indoor parlour, while a similar pavilion—at once divided from and